

EARLY RECORDS OF THE WILD TURKEY. III.

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THE following notes are classified according to political divisions and are arranged in chronological order.

Canada.

The Turkey was not a widely distributed bird in Canada and most of the Jesuit records are outside its confines. In their first note they speak of it in a mythical way. They recount how an Indian chief of the Tobacco Nation supposedly holds thunder in his hand. "This thunder is, by his account, a man like a Turkey-cock."¹ In another way, it enters the repertorie of the medicine men. One² "carried a Turkey's wing, with which he fanned them gravely and at a distance, after having given them something to drink." To his disciples or substitutes, "as a token — he left them each a Turkey's wing, adding that henceforth their dreams would prove true." About Lake Erie (1640),³ "They have also multitudes of wild turkeys, which go in flocks through the fields and woods." One hundred years later (1749) in this same region Bonnacamp says,⁴ "It is at this lake that I saw for the first time the wild turkeys. They differ in no way from our domestic turkeys."

In the Niagara country, Hennepin, in 1698,⁵ "saw great numbers of — Wild Turkey-Cocks." Between Lakes Erie and Huron "Turkey Cocks — are there also very common." And finally, in his "Continuation of the New Discovery (p. 130)," he writes "There are to be had — Turkies, which are of an extraordinary bigness." Following Hennepin, comes Baron LaHontan (1703) who

¹ Thwaites, R. G. *The Jesuit Relations and Other Allied Documents.* #610-1791. Vol. X, Le Jeune's Relation, 1636, p. 195.

² *ibid.*, Vol. XIII (1637), p. 241, 243.

³ *ibid.*, Vol. XXI (1640-1641), p. 197.

⁴ *ibid.*, Vol. LXIX (1710-1756), p. 161.

⁵ Hennepin, L. *A New Discovery of a Vast Country in America, etc.* London, 1698, pp. 40, 63.

notes along the north coast of Lake Erie,¹ "the great numbers of Turkeys, that we were obliged to eat upon the Spot, for fear that the heat of the Season would spoil 'em." "Upon the brink of this Lake we frequently saw flocks of fifty or sixty Turkey's, which run incredibly fast upon the Sands; And the Savages of our Company kill'd great numbers of 'em, which they gave to us in exchange for the Fish that we catch'd" Finally, in his list of the birds for the South Countries of Canada, he includes the Turkey. In 1760, T. Jefferys writes that² "turkies . . . are found (in Canada),—except in the neighbourhood of plantations, where they never come." "The History of North America, London, 1776" credits (p. 235) Canada with "a great number of . . . turkeys . . ." In 1807, Heriot finds "The birds of the southern parts of Canada are . . . turkeys, . . ."³ In 1820, Sansom gives among⁴ "the feathered game, with which these woods and waters abound in their season, . . . wild geese, . . . wild turkies." Fifteen years later, Shireff states that⁵ "The turkey is found only in the western district (of Canada) in limited numbers." "The turkey is said to inhabit this district (near the Detroit River) in considerable numbers, and the boy who conducted us out of Chatham plains told me he had come on a hen and her brood a short time before, but this bird was not seen by me." In Canada, Godley says⁶ "The only birds which remain all the winter—in the west (are) a few wild turkeys." At Amherstburgh, Canada, "you have . . . wild turkeys." Finally, in 1851, Smith (l. c., Vol. II, p. 405) writes of this form as follows: "In addition to these, we have the Wild Turkey, which, however, is confined to the southwest of the Province; . . . The Wild Turkey, although the stock from whence our English domestic Turkey sprang, is rather difficult to tame, even when taken young from the nest, or reared from the eggs, under the fostering care of the domestic hen; and unless closely watched, they are apt to

¹ LaHontan, Baron. *New Voyages to North America.* London 1703. Vol. I, pp. 99, 82, 83; Vol. II, p. 237.

² Jefferys, T. *The Natural and Civil History of the French Dominions in North and South America.* London, 1760. Part I, p. 39.

³ Heriot, George. *Travels through the Canadas, etc.* London, 1807, p. 516.

⁴ Sansom, Joseph. *Travel in Lower Canada, . . .* London, 1820, p. 49.

⁵ Shireff, P. *A Tour of North America; . . .* Edinburgh. 1835, pp. 390, 214.

⁶ Godley, J. R. *Letters from America, . . .* 2 vols., London, 1844. Vol. I, pp. 247, 248.

make their escape, and take to the woods in the following spring. The Turkey is naturally a very stupid bird."

New England.

In New England, most of the records precede 1800. The first note of this region is incidental in its allusion to the turkey. In "The Relation of Captain Gosnold's Voyage to the North part of Virginia" Gabriel Archer writes that on May 18, 1602,¹ "one of them (Indians) had his face painted over and head stuck with feathers in the manner of a turkey cock's train." The first note of real interest is Champlain's surmise of its occurrence in New England. In the voyage of 1604 we have the following:² "The savages, along all these coasts where we have been, say that other birds, which are very large, come along when their corn is ripe. They imitated for us their cry, which resembles that of the turkey. They showed us their feathers in several places, with which they feather their arrows, and which they put on their heads for decoration; and also a kind of hair which they have under the throat like those we have in France, and they say that a red crest falls over upon the beak. According to their description, they are as large as a bustard, which is a kind of goose, having the neck longer and twice as large as with us. All these indications led us to conclude that they were turkeys. We should have been very glad to see some of these birds, as well as their feathers, for the sake of greater certainty. Before seeing their feathers, and the little bunch of hair which they have under the throat, and hearing their cry imitated, I should have thought that they were certain birds like turkeys, which are found in some places in Peru, along the sea-shore, eating carrion and other dead things like crows. But these are not so large; nor do they have so long a bill, or a cry like that of real turkeys; nor are they good to eat like those which the Indians say come in flocks in summer, and at the beginning of winter go away to warmer countries, their natural dwelling-place."

In "A Description of New England (1616)" John Smith notes

¹ Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls. Third Series. Vol. VIII, 1843, p. 75.

² The Prince Society, The Publications of. Vol. 12, 1878, Boston, pp. 88, 89.

turkeys. In his "New England Trialls, 2nd edit. 1622"¹ he holds "no place hath more goose-berries and strawberries, nor better Timber of all sorts you have in England, doth cover the Land, that afford beasts of divers sorts and great flocks of Turkies, . . ." In his "A Brief Relation of the Discovery and Plantation of New England. London 1622" he says,² "The country aboundeth with diversity of wild fowls as Turkies, . . ." In his "History of the Plymouth Plantation", Wm. Bradford, the second governor of the colony writes³ "besides water fowle, ther was great store of wild Turkies of which they took many" in the fall of 1621. In "New Englands Plantation, London, 1630" Francis Higginson says⁴ "Here are likewise abundance of Turkies often killed in the Woods, farre greater then our English Turkies, and exceeding fat, sweet and fleshy, for here they have abundance of feeding all the yeere long, as Strawberries, in Summer all places are full of them and all manner of Berries and Fruits."

In 1632, the well known "New English Canaan" by Thomas Morton appears.⁵ "Turkies there are, which divers times in great flocks have sallied by our doores; and then a gunne (being commonly in redinesse), salutes them with such a courtesie, as makes them take a turne in the Cooke roome. They daunce by the doore so well. Of these there hath bin killed that have weighed forty eight pounds a peece. They are by mainy degrees sweeter then the tame Turkies of England, feede them how you can. I had a Salvage who hath taken out his boy in a morning, and they have brought home their loades about noone. I have asked them what number they found in the woods, who have answered Neent Metawna, which is a thousand that day; the plenty of them is such in those parts. They are easily killed at rooste, because the one being killed, the other sit fast neverthesse, and this is no bad commodity." "They make likewise some Coates of the Feathers of Turkies, which they weave together with twine of their owne makeinge, very pritily:"

¹ Force, Peter. *Tracts Relating to America.* Vol. II, Washington, 1838, pp. 16, 14.

² Prince Soc. Publ. Vol. 18, 1890, p. 230 (orig. p. 26).

³ Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls. Fourth Ser. Vol. III, 1856, p. 105.

⁴ Force, P. Vol. I (1836), p. 10.

⁵ Force, P. Vol. II, pp. 48, 22.

Two years later, 1634, William Wood publishes in London his "New Englands Prospect" in which appears this curious and interesting statement.¹ "The Turkey is a very large Bird, of a blacke colour, yet white in flesh; much bigger than our *English* Turkey. He hath the use of his long legs so ready, that he can runne as fast as a Dogge, and flye as well as a Goose: of these sometimes there will be forty, three score, and a hundred in a flocke, sometimes more and sometimes lesse; their feeding is Acornes, Hawes, and Berries, some of them get a haunt to frequent our *English* corne; In winter when the Snow covers the ground they resort to the Seashore to look for Shrimps, and such smal Fishes at low tides. Such as love Turkie hunting, must follow it in winter after a new falne Snow, when hee may follow them by ther tracts; some have killed ten or a dozen in halfe a day; if they can be found towards an evening and watched where they peirch, if one come about ten or eleaven of the clocke he may shoote as often as he will, they will sit unless they be slenderly wounded. These Turkies remain all the yeare long, the price of a good Turkie cocke is foure shillings; and he is well worth it, for he may be in weight forty pound; a Hen two shillings." In 1643, Roger Williams in his "Key into the Language of America" gives us two notes: The turkey is called² "neyhom." "They (Indians) lay nets on shore, and catch many fowls upon the plains, and feeding under oaks upon acorns, as geese, turkies. . . ." The other statement refers to "Neyhommaushunck: a *coat* or *mantle*, curiously made of the fairest feathers of their Neyhommauog, or *turkies*, which commonly their old men make, and is with them as velvet with us." In "Good News from New England. London 1648" we find³ "The Turkies. . . and their young ones tracing passe." In 1649, John Winthrop publishes his "History of New England from 1630 to 1649," and on Oct. 31, 1632, he speaks of a party who⁴ "came, that evening, to Wessaguscus, where they were bountifully entertained, as before with store of turkeys. . . ."

¹ Prince Soc. Publ. Vol. I, 1865, p. 32.

² Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls. First Series. Vol. III. Reprint 1810, Boston, pp. 219, 225.

³ Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls. 4th Series. Vol. I, p. 202.

⁴ Winthrop, John. History of New England. . . . Edited by James Savage 2 vols., Boston, 1825. Vol. I, p. 93.

John Josslyn Gent, already well introduced to ornithologists, in 1675 presents a strange account.¹ "The Turkie, which is in *New England* a very large Bird, they breed twice or thrice in a year, if you would perceive the young Chickens alive, you must give them no water, for if they come to have their fill of water they will drop away strangely, and you will never be able to rear any of them: they are excellent meat, especially a *Turkie Capon* beyond that, for which Eight shillings was given, their Eggs are very wholesome and restore decayed nature exceedingly. But the *French* say they breed the Leprosie; the Indesses make Coats of *Turkie* feathers woven for their Children." Not long after, 1680, Wm. Hubbard in a "General History of *New England*" lists² "Turkies" among the birds of the region. In 1686, John Dutton in "Letters Written from *New England*, London 1705" speaks of the coat of turkey feathers.³ "Within this Coat or Skin they creep very contentedly, by day or night in the House or in the Woods, and sleep soundly too, counting it a great happiness that every Man is content with his skin." The following year, 1687, Richard Blome alludes to this garment as follows:⁴ The *New England* Indians "weave curious Coats with *Turkey* feathers for their Children etc."

In the first part of the next century, we have little appertaining to the *New England* turkey. In 1720, Neal states that⁵ "D. C. Mather (Phil. Transactions XXIX, p. 64) says, they have wild Turkies of 50 or 60 Pound Weight, . . ." In 1741, Oldmixon, holds⁶ "there's hardly greater Variety and Plenty of Fowl anywhere than in *New England*, as Turkies. . . ." In travels made 1759 and 1760, Andrew Bernaby finds⁷ "The forests abound with plenty of game of various kinds; hares, turkies, . . ." and includes it in his catalogue of birds as "Wild Turkey Gallo Pavo Sylvestris." In 1760, Paul Coffin "saw wild Turkey's Feathers here and there" near

¹ Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls. Third Series. III, 1833, p. 277 (orig. p. 99).

² Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls. Second Series. V, 1817, p. 25.

³ Prince Soc. Publ. Vol. IV, 1867, pp. 224, 225.

⁴ Blome, Richard. The Present State of His Majesties Isles and Territories in America, etc. London, 1687, p. 235.

⁵ Neal, Daniel. The History of *New England*. London, 1720, Vol. II, p. 572.

⁶ Oldmixon, J. The British Empire in America. 2nd edit. London, 1741. Vol. I, p. 186.

⁷ Bernaby, Rev. Andrew. Travels, etc. 3rd edit. London, 1798, pp. 13, 127.

New Haven.¹ Ten years later, 1770, Wynne claims² "New England produces a great variety of fowls; such as. . . turkies. . ." In 1782, Rev. Samuel Peters (*A General History of Connecticut*, 1782, p. 255) gives turkeys among the feathered tribe in Connecticut. Belknap 1792, in N. H. says³ "Wild Turkies were formerly very numerous. In winter they frequented the seashore, for the sake of picking small fishes and marine insects which the tide leaves on the flats. . . . They are now retired to the inland mountainous country." In 1819, Warden repeats the same for N. H. Williams, in his "*History of Vermont*", just mentions (p. 120) the "Wild Turkey, *Meleagris gallopavo*." Writing in 1807-1808, Edward A. Kendall, says the Turkey Mountains, (Connecticut)⁴ "have their name from the flocks of wild turkeys by which they were formerly frequented, but of which none are at present seen." In New England, Timothy Dwight records,⁵ "Turkies" among "the Land Birds principally coveted at the tables of luxury. The *Wild Turkey* is very large, and very fine: much larger and much finer, than those which are tame. They are, however, greatly lessened in their numbers, and in the most populous parts of the country are not very often seen." Lastly, in 1842, Zadock Thompson writes of it as follows:⁶ "The Wild Turkey. *Meleagris gallopavo*. The Wild Turkey, which was formerly common throughout our whole country, has everywhere diminished with the advancement of the settlements, and is now becoming exceedingly rare in all parts of New England, and indeed in all the eastern parts of the United States. A few of them, however, continue still to visit and breed upon the mountains in the southern part of the state. The Domestic Turkey sprung from this species, and was sent from Mexico to Spain in the 16th century. It was introduced into England in 1524, and into France and other parts of Europe about the same time."

¹ Colls. Me. Hist. Soc. First Series. Vol. IV, p. 264.

² Wynne, J. H. *A General History of the British Empire in America*; etc. 2 vols. London, 1770, vol. I, p. 41.

³ Belknap, J., l. c. Vol. III, p. 170.

⁴ Kendall, Edward A. *Travels through the Northern Parts of the United States in the Years 1807 and 1808*. 3 vols. N. Y. 1809. Vol. I, p. 219.

⁵ Dwight, Timothy. *Travels; in New England and New York*. 4 vols. New Haven, 1821-22. Vol. I, p. 55.

⁶ Thompson, Zadock. *History of Vermont, Natural Civil and Statistical*. Burlington, 1842, p. 101.

New York.

Most of the notes come in the seventeenth century in the "Narratives of New Netherlands." They begin with John de Laet's "The New World" in which (1625) he says that¹ "In winter superior turkey cocks are taken; they are very fat, and their flesh is of the best quality." In 1628, a letter of Isaac de Rasieres to Samuel Blommaert recounts how² "some (Indians have) a covering made of turkey feathers which they understand how to knit together very oddly, with small strings." In a "Narrative of a Journey into the Mohawk and Oneida Country, 1634-1635" the travellers³ "went out to shoot turkeys with the chief, but could not get any. In the evening I bought a very fat one for two hands of seawan. The chief cooked it for us and the grease he mixed with our beans and maize." In the Vocabulary of the Moquas, "Schawari wane" is "Turkeys." In 1633-1643, David Pietersz De Vries finds the New Netherlands⁴ "a beautiful place for hunting deer, wild turkeys, . . ." Again he writes, "I returned home and on my way shot a wild turkey weighing over thirty pounds, and brought it along with me." Of the Indians, he remarks that "They . . . wear coats of turkey's feathers, which they know how to plait together." He discovers that "Land birds are also very numerous, such as wild turkeys, which weigh from thirty to thirty-six and forty pounds, and which fly wild, for they can fly one or two thousand paces, and then fall down, tired from flying, when they are taken by the savages with their hands, who also shoot them with bows and arrows." The same author when at Wyngaert's Kill⁵ "Went out daily, while here, to shoot. Shot many wild turkeys, weighing from thirty to thirty six pounds. Their great size and very fine flavour are surprising." In the year 1639, "They also had this year, great numbers of Turkeys."

A "Journal of New Netherlands, 1647" gives⁶ "The birds which

¹ N. Y. Hist. Soc. Colls. Vol. I, 1841, p. 311.

² Narratives of New Netherlands, N. Y. 1909, pp. 106, 115.

³ *ibid.*, pp. 141, 142, 158.

⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 209, 215, 217, 221.

⁵ N. Y. Hist. Soc. Colls. New Series. Vol. III, 1857, pp. 28, 37, 90.

⁶ Narratives of New Netherlands, N. Y. 1909, p. 270.

are natural to the country are turkeys like ours, . . .” The Indians “go almost naked except a lap . . . and on the shoulders a deer-skin or a mantle, a fathom square, of woven Turkey feathers . . .” In 1644, Johannes Megalopensis in “A Short Sketch of the Mohawk Indians” says ¹ “There are also many turkies as large as in Holland but in some years less than in others. The year before (1641) I came here there were so many turkies and deer that came to the houses and hog pens to feed and were taken by the Indians with so little trouble. In “The Representation of New Netherland, 1650” by Adrian van der Donck we find ² “The other birds found in this country are turkies, the same as in the Netherlands, but they are wild, and are plentiest and best in winter.” and “others (Indians) have coats made of . . . turkey’s feathers.” The same gentleman in “A Description of the New Netherlands, Amsterdam 1656” calls ³ “The most important fowl of the country, . . . the wild turkey. They resemble the tame turkeys of the Netherlands. Those birds are common in the woods all over the country, and are found in large flocks, from twenty to forty in a flock. They are large, heavy fat and fine, weighing from twenty to thirty pounds each, and I have heard of one that weighed thirty two pounds. When they are well cleaned and roasted on a spit, then they are excellent, and differ little in taste from the tame turkeys; but the epicures prefer the wild kind. They are best in the fall of the year, when the Indians will usually sell a turkey for ten stivers, and with the Christians the common price is a daelder each.”

In the “Voyages Of Peter Esprit Radisson” we find that when in the Iroquois country (1653) he kills ⁴ “stagges and a great many Tourquies.” In 1670, Daniel Denton in “A Brief Description of New York” says ⁵ “Wild Fowl there is great store of as Turkies . . .,” and writes that the settler “besides the pleasure in Hunting, . . . may furnish his house with excellent fat Venison, Turkies . . .” Montanus in his “Description of New Netherlands 1671” finds ⁶

¹ N. Y. Hist. Soc. Colls. N. S. Vol. IV, 1857, p. 150.

² Narratives of New Netherlands. pp. 297, 301.

³ N. Y. H. S. Colls. N. S. 1841, Vol. I, p. 172.

⁴ Prince Soc. Publ. 1885, Vol. 16, p. 66.

⁵ Bull. Hist. Soc. Pa. Vol. I, 1845-47, pp. 6, 15.

⁶ Doc. Hist. State New York. Vol. IV, 1851, pp. 118, 125.

"turkeys . . . are, also easily obtained." "this country particularly abounds in turkeys whose number excites no less admiration than their rich flavour and their large size; for they go together in flocks of thirty and forty; they weigh some thirty or more pounds; they are shot or are caught with a bait concealing the hook." The last note in this century is by Jasper Dankers and Peter Sluyter. In the fall of 1679, they ¹ "had to go along the shore, finding some fine creeks well provided with wild turkeys." Again they "were . . . served with wild turkey, which was also fat and of a good flavour."

At the time of the French and Indian War we have two notes. In the "Journal of Gen Rufus Putnam kept in Northern New York, . . . 1757-1760" he states ² that "on our march in this river (near Dutch Hoosack) this day (Feb. 4, 1758) Capt. Learned killed two turkeys." On the following day, they "killed another turkey . . . which we spared for necessity. We encamped this night with sad hearts and the countenance of every man shewed he was perplexed in mind, in consideration that the turkey was the chief of the provision that we had." In Hugh Gibson's *Captivity among the Delaware Indians, July 1756-Apr. 1759*, we find that his captors when near Painted Post ³ "killed one turkey." Twenty years later, 1779, two other captives, John and Robert Brice, report that in their journey to Canada the Indians killed plenty of turkeys from Unadilla River to Chemung and Genesee Rivers.⁴ In the time of Tom Quick, the Indian Slayer, or in the latter part of the 18th century, we find that ⁵ "the wild turkey, from which Callicoon (N. Y.) derives its name had not yet fled, like the aborigine, to a more solitary and secure retreat." The Stockbridge Indian country in 1804 is said to have ⁶ "Of the feathered kinds, turkies." The same year, Robert Munro in his *Description of the Genesee country* gives the turkey among the great variety of birds for game in this fertile region.⁷

¹ *Journal of a Voyage to New York and a Tour in Several of the American Colonies in 1679-80.* Transl. by H. C. Murphy. Brooklyn, 1867, pp. 123, 145.

² *Journal, etc.* Edited by E. C. Dawes. Albany, N. Y., 1886, p. 53.

³ *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls. Third Series. Vol. VI, p. 147.*

⁴ Priest, Jos. *Stories of the Revolution.* Albany, 1838, p. 5.

⁵ Tom Quick *the Indian Slayer, . . . Monticello, N. Y., 1851, p. 225.*

⁶ *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls. 1804. Vol. IX, p. 99.*

⁷ *Doc. Hist. New York. Vol. II, 1849, p. 1174 (Svo edition).*

Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware.

The first note discovered comes in 1634, when Capt. Thomas Yong, in his "Voyage to Virginia and Delaware Bay and R.," records¹ "an infinite number of . . . turkeys," in the latter region. Fourteen years later, 1648, in "A Description of the Province of New Albion" Beauchamp Plantagenet describes² "The uplands (as) covered many moneths with berries, roots chestnuts, walnuts, Birch and Oak Mast to feed them, Hogges and Turkeys, 500 in a flock, . . ." He repeats the same in several places and finds that "Here the Soldier, and Gentlemen wanting employment, . . . with five hundred Turkeys in a flock got by nets, in stalling get five shil a day at least." In 1680, Mahlon Stacy writing to his brother Revell says³ "We have . . . of . . . fowls, plenty, as . . . turkie." Three years later, "A Letter from William Penn" holds that⁴ "Of the fowl of the land, there is the turkey, (Forty and fifty pounds weight) which is very great." The same year, a letter from Pennsylvania by Thomas Paskel mentions that⁵ "There are here very great quantities of birds . . . Turkeys (Cocqs d'Inde) . . . (I have bought) for two or three pounds of shot apiece." The following year, 1684, "A Collection of Various Pieces concerning Pennsylvania," has it that⁶ "The woods are supplied with a quantity of wild birds, as turkeys of an extraordinary size, . . ." About the same time, Pastorius writes⁷ "There is, besides a great abundance of wild geese, . . . turkeys, . . ." "When he first came into the country, an Indian promised for a certain price to bring him a wild turkey, but instead of that he brought him a snake, and wanted to persuade him that it was a real turkey." Towards the close of this century, Gabriel Thomas mentions among the fowl of⁸ "Sus-

¹ Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls. Fourth Series, 1871. Vol. IX, p. 130.

² Force, P. Vol. II, pp. 20, 27, 32, 34, 12.

³ Raum, J. O. History of New Jersey. Phila., 1877, Vol. I, p. 109.

⁴ Proud, Robert. The History of Pennsylvania, etc. Vol. I, 1797, p. 250!

⁵ Penn. Mag. Hist. and Biog. Vol. VI, p. 326.

⁶ *ibid.*, p. 313.

⁷ Memoirs Hist. Soc. Penn. Vol. IV, 1840, p. 91 (Part II); III, p. 117.

⁸ Thomas, Gabriel. An Historical and Geographic Account of Pensilvania; and of West-New Jersey in America. London, 1698. New York, 1848, edit., pp. 13, 22.

kahanah" "Turkies (Of Forty of Fifty Pound Weight)," and lists them "among the Land-Fowl."

Four years later in the next century, 1702, Holm finds¹ "of birds and fowls, there are. . . turkeys, . . ." The same year, Rev. Andreas Sandel tells a funny story of a fox mistaking a hidden man for a turkey.² In a "Journey from Pennsylvania to Onondaga," Conrad Weiser (1737) remarks³ the presence of turkeys along the trip. Six years later, 1743, John Bartram on a similar journey on⁴ "The 4th (July 1743), set out before day, and stopp'd at Marcus Hulin's by Manatony; then crossed Skuykill, and rode along the west side over rich bottoms, after which we ascended the *Flying Hill*, (so called from the great number of Wild Turkeys that used to fly from them to the plains)." In 1748 (November), Kalm finds⁵ "The *wild* Turkeys, . . . were in flocks in the woods." In a "General State of Pennsylvania between the years 1760 and 1770"⁶ occurs this significant statement: "wild turkeys, among the winged tribe, were formerly very plentiful, but now scarce." In 1765 we find that Samuel Smith's "Nova-Caesaria or New Jersey" holds that⁷ "Of these birds there are great plenty: as the wild turkey, . . ." During the Sullivan expedition, Lieutenant Wm. Barton when at Tunkhannock, Pa., (July 3, 1779) finds⁸ "This place very remarkable for deer. . . turkeys, several of which were taken by the troops without firing a single gun, there being positive orders to the contrary: otherwise might have killed many more during our halt." In 1788, John Ettwein in his "Remarks upon the Traditions etc. of the Indians of North America" says⁹ "Of that hemp (wild hemp) they made Twine to knit the Feathers of Turkeys, . . . into Blankets." In "Indian Names of Rivers, Streams, etc." by Maurice C. Jones, Kenzua Cr. Kenjua Cr. (Kentschuak) is said to

¹ Memoirs Hist. Soc. Penn. Vol. III, 1834, pp. 41, 117.

² Penn. Mag. Hist. and Biog. Vol. XXX, p. 290.

³ Penn. Hist. Soc. Colls. Phila. 1853, Vol. I, p. 22.

⁴ Observations Made by Mr. John Bartram, etc. London, 1754, p. 9.

⁵ Kalm, Peter. Travels, etc. Transl. by J. R. Forster. Warrington, 1770, Vol. I, p. 290.

⁶ Proud, R. *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 263.

⁷ Smith, Samuel. The History of the Colony of Nova-Caesaria or New Jersey. Burlington, N. J., 1765. 2nd. edit. 1877, p. 511.

⁸ N. J. Hist. Soc. Proc. Vol. 2, p. 26.

⁹ Bull. Hist. Soc. Penn. Vol. I, 1845-1847, p. 32.

mean¹ "They gobble (viz wild turkies) The gobbling reply which the turkey cock makes to the call of the hen. The place which bears the name must have been a favorite place of the turkies." Of "Chiknicomika. Chikenecomike or Tschikenumik" it says "Place of turkies, where turkies are plenty." In another place, it appears "Chickahominy Chikamawhomy (Eng. idiom) Turkey lick. Tschikenemahoni (German idiom) Turkey lick, or the lick at which the turkies are so plenty. I know several places bearing this name for the same reasons. These turkies go there to drink," Of this form in Pennsylvania, William Bartram (l. c. pp. 286, 290) writes, "These breed and continue the year round in Pennsylvania."

In the nineteenth century, we have more notes for Pennsylvania than for N. Y. or N. E. and doubtless the species held its own longer in this state. Thaddeus Mason Harris in 1803, when he reaches Laurel Hill, notes that² "For more than fifty miles, to the west and north, the mountains were burning. This is done by hunters, who set fire to the dry leaves and decayed fallen timber in the vallies, in order to thin the undergrowth, that they may traverse the woods with more ease in the pursuit of game. But they defeat their own object: for the fires. . . . destroy the turkies. . . ., at this season on their nests, or just leading out their broods." In 1804 (Dec. 20), Robert Sutcliffe³ "came this day to Jersey town where I slept. In passing through the woods this afternoon I saw a flock of wild turkeys running along the ground." In an "Account of Buckingham and Solebury, Penn. 1806," Watson remarks⁴ "Deer, turkeys and other small game made a plenty supply of excellent provision in their season." In 1810, F. Cuming (l. c. p. 37) finds that wild turkeys "abounds on these mountains" about Strasburg. In the same year, Christian Schultz publishes his "Travels." He says,⁵ "I had never seen a wild turkey before I descended this river (Alleghany), where I had an opportunity of shooting a great many.

¹ *ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 127, 140, 141.

² Harris, T. M. *The Journal of a Tour into the Territory Northwest of the Alleghany Mountains. Made in the Spring of the Year 1803.* Boston, 1805, pp. 22, 23.

³ Sutcliffe, R. *Travels in Some Parts of North America, in the Years 1804, 1805, and 1806.* Phila., 1812, p. 170.

⁴ *Mem. Hist. Soc. Penn.* Vol. I, 1826, p. 303.

⁵ Schultz, Christian. Vol. I, p. 122.

They are very plentiful in this quarter, and considered the largest known throughout the western country, many of them weighing from thirty to forty pounds, and sometimes so overburthened with fat that they fly with difficulty." In 1818, Rev. John Heckewelder's "History, Manners and Customs of the Indian Nations" speaks of the turkey coats.¹ "The feathers, generally those of turkey and goose, are so curiously arranged and interwoven together with thread and twine, which they prepare from the rind or bark of the wild hemp or nettle, that ingenuity and skill cannot be denied them.

Four years later, Wm. H. Blane (l. c. p. 88) when near Smithfield on the Youghiogheny River, writes "I observed that two hunters, who had just come in with some turkies they had killed, were each of them carrying one of the long heavy rifles peculiar to the Americans." In 1832, Mrs. Trollope when at Brownsville, was² "regaled luxuriously on wild turkey . . ." The same year, Vigne presents his "Six Months in America." When at Moshanan Creek he finds (Vol. I, pp. 88, 89) "The winged game of these forests are the wild turkey, which being pursued with avidity by the sportsman, is becoming more scarce every day: it is larger than the tame turkey and its plumage closely resembles that of the dark-coloured domesticated bird, but is rather more brilliant." The third note to be presented in 1832 is the rather general account of Hinton.³ "The native country of the wild turkey extends from the north-western territory of the United States to the Isthmus of Panama. In Canada, and the now densely-peopled parts of the United States, they were formerly very abundant; but like the Indian and the buffalo they have been compelled to yield to the destructive ingenuity of the white settlers, often wantonly exercised, and to seek refuge in the remotest parts of the interior. On hearing the slightest noise, they conceal themselves in the grass, or among shrubs, and thus frequently escape the hunter, or the sharp-eyed birds of prey: and the sportsman is unable to find them during the

¹ *Memoirs Hist. Soc. Penn.* Vol. XII, 1881, p. 203.

² Trollope, Mrs. *Domestic Manners of the Americans.* 4 edit. London and N. Y., p. 162.

³ Hinton, J. H. *The History and Topography of the United States.* London, 1832, 2 vols. Vol. II, p. 177.

day, unless he has a dog trained for the purpose. When only wounded, they quickly disappear, and, accelerating their motion by a sort of half flight, run with so much speed that the swiftest hunter cannot overtake them. The traveller driving the declivity of one of the Alleghanies, may sometimes see several of them before him, evincing no desire to get out of the road; but on alighting in the hopes of shooting them, he soon finds that all pursuit is vain." Finally, in 1843, Maximilian, Prince of Wied, when at Borden-town, Penn., says ¹ "Fans, are, in fact, an article of luxury, and are purchased in the towns; they are made of the tail feathers of the wild turkey, the crane or the swan, '...'"

Virginia and Maryland.

These furnish numerous records in the seventeenth century. Only one note precedes this period and this occurs in Thomas Heriot's "A Briefe and True Relation of the New Found Land of Virginia, London, 1588." He gives ² "Of Foule. *Turkie cockes* and *Turkie hennes*." The first note of the 17th century is that of Master George Percy in his "Observations gathered out of A Discourse of the Plantation of the Southern Colonie in Virginia by the English 1606" wherein he asserts ³ "We found store of Turkie nests and many egges." "A Gentleman of the Colony" (Gabriel Archer) in "A relaytion of the Discovery" ⁴ "founde (1607 May 22) an Ilet, on which were many Turkeys" and later he again writes "we come to the Ilet mentyoned which I call Turley Ile." In 1612, Captain John Smith in "A Map of Virginia With a Description of the Countrey" remarks ⁵ "wilde Turkies as bigge as our tame," and finds that the Indian arrows are "headed with . . . the spurres of a Turkey . . ."

The interesting Wm. Strachey in 1610?-1612? gives us three notes. First of all he says, ⁶ "We have seene some (Indian women)

¹ Early Western Travels. XXII, p. 68 (orig. Part I, p. 19.)

² Heriot, Thomas. etc. Reprint London, 1900, p. 41.

³ Arber, Edward. Capt. John Smith, etc. Works 1608-1631, Eng. Scholars Library. No. 16, p. lxvi.

⁴ *ibid.*, pp. xli, xlii.

⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 60, 68, 70.

⁶ Strachey, William. *Historie of Travaile into Virginia.* Hakluyt Soc. London. 1849, pp. 65, 72, 125.

use mantells made both of Turkey feathers and other fowle, so prettily wrought and woven with threads, that nothing could be discerned but the feathers, which were exceeding warme and handsome." In another place, he writes "Nor (do they) bring up tame poultry, albeit they have great stoore of turkies, nor keepe birdes, squirrels, nor tame partridges, . . . In March and April they live much upon their weeres, and feed on fish, turkies . . ." Finally comes a more general statement. "Turkeys there be great store, wild in the woods, like phesants in England, forty in a company, as big as our tame here, and it is an excellent fowle, and so passing good meat, as I maye well saie, it is the best of any kind of flesh which I have ever yet eaten there." In "A True Declaration of the Estate of the Colonie in Virginia, . . . London, 1610" we have the following:¹ "The Turkeye of that Countrie are great, and fat, and exceeding in plentie." In 1613, Alex. Whitaker says² "The woods be everywhere full of wilde Turkies, which abound, and will runne as swift as a Greyhound." In 1614, Ralph Hamor, in the same country, finds³ "There are fowle of divers sorts, . . . wild Turkeyes much bigger then our English Cranes." Four years later, 1618, in "Newes of Sr. Walter Rauleigh . . ." there appears⁴ "you shall not sleepe on the groun nor eat any new flesh till it be salted, two or three hours, which otherwise, will breed a most dangerous fluxe, so will the eating of . . . Turkies." A "Briefe Intelligence from Virginia by Letters, etc., 1624," "Virginias Verger 1625," and "Some later Advertisements touching His Majesties Care for Virginia 1624" — all three remark⁵ the abundance of turkeys in Virginia.

In 1631, Henry Fleet, Early Indian Trader notes that⁶ "the woods (above Washington) do swarm with "turkeys. Three years later, Father Andrew White in "A Briefe Relation of the Voyage into Maryland" observes⁷ "Their weapons are a bow and

¹ Force, P. Vol. III, p. 13.

² Hakluyt Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes. By Samuel Purchas. Hakluyt Soc. Extra Series Glasgow 1905-1907. Vol. 19, p. 115.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. 19, p. 97.

⁴ Force, P. Vol. III, p. 17.

⁵ Hakluyt Posthumus. Vol. 19, p. 209, Vol. 20, p. 134.

⁶ Neill, Rev. E. D., *Founders of Maryland.* Albany, 1876, p. 27.

⁷ *Narratives of Early Maryland. 1633-1684.* N. Y., 1910, pp. 34, 43, 44.

a bundle of arrowes, an ell long, feathered with turkies feathers." These Indians "daily catch . . . turkies, . . ." and "the poore soules are daily with us and bring us turkie, . . ." In "An Account of the Colony of the Lord Baron of Baltimore, 1633" the author writes that¹ "There are also great quantities of wild turkeys, which are twice as large as our tame and domestic ones . . ." About the same time, "A Relation of Maryland" records that² "they (at Yoacomaco) went dayly to hunt with them for Deere and Turkies, whereff some gave them for Presents, and the meaner sort would sell to them for knives, beades and the like." "Of Birds" it relates that "there is . . . also wild Turkeys in great abundance whereof many weigh 50 pounds and upwards." In this period, another relator holds that³ "every day they are abroad after . . . turkies and the like game: whereof there is a wonderful plenty." In another instance, he recounts how the modest Indian women brought turkies to the homes of the settlers.

About 15 years afterwards, in "A Perfect Description of Virginia . . ." there appears a note concerning⁴ "Wild Turkies, some weighing sixtie pound weight." In 1650, Edward Williams publishes the second edition of his "Virginia" wherein he mentions⁵ "infinetes of wilde Turkeyes, which have been known to weigh fifty-pound weight, ordinarily forty," and in comparing Virginia with China, he exclaims, "Let her shew us Turkies of 50 pound weight." Six years later, 1656, "Leah and Rachel" appears. Hammond, its author, claims⁶ "wild Turkeys are frequent, and so large that I have seen some weigh neer threescore pounds." Ten years later, George Alsop, in describing the "Character of the Province of Maryland" notes⁷ "especially the Turkey, whom I have seen in whole hundreds in flights in the Woods of Mary-Land, being an extraordinary fat Fowl, whose flesh is very pleasant and sweet." Shortly after, 1669, Nathaniel Shrigley enumerates⁸ "Turkies"

¹ *ibid.*, p. 10.

² *ibid.*, pp. 75, 80, 98.

³ Shea's *Early Southern Tracts*. No. I, pp. 16, 18.

⁴ Force, P. Vol. II, pp. 17, 3.

⁵ Force, P. Vol. III, pp. 12, 21.

⁶ Force, P. Vol. III, p. 13.

⁷ *Narratives of Early Maryland*. pp. 347, 357.

⁸ Force, P. Vol. III, p. 4.

among the "Fowle naturally to the Land." In 1688, Mr. John Clayton the Botanist, communicates to the Royal Society the following:¹ "Ther be wild Turkies extream large; they talk of Turkies that have been kill'd, that have weighed betwixt 50 and 60 Pound weight; the largest that I ever saw, weigh'd someting better than 38 Pound; they have very long Legs, and will run prodigiously fast. I remember not that ever I saw any of them on the Wing, except it were once. Their Feathers are of a blackish shining Colour, that in the Sun shine like a Dove's neck, very specious." The year previous, 1687, Richard Blome (l. c. p. 189) holds, "They have great plenty of Fowl: as *wild Turkeys*, which usually weigh six Stone, or forty eight pound;" Finally, in "The Social Life of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century," P. A. Bruce (l. c. pp. 212, 167) writes as follows: "As the area of cultivated ground grew wider, the number of partridges steadily increased in consequence of their being able to find a larger supply of food. On the other hand, the number of wild turkeys perhaps as steadily diminished within the same area, as the turkey is distinctly a forest bird, that is very shy of human habitations." "The wild turkeys frequenting the woods were of remarkable weight and afforded a popular repast."

In the eighteenth century, the records number fourteen or fifteen. In 1705, Robert Beverley in his "History and Present State of Virginia. London" (book III, p. 60) writes that "They (Indian) fledged their Arrows with Turkey Feathers, which they fastened with Glue etc.,— they also headed them with the Spurs of the Wild Turkey-Cock." In 1708, Eben Cook, in burlesque verse, remarks its presence in Maryland and adds a footnote that² "Wild turkies are very good Meat, and prodigiously large in *Maryland*." In the "History of the Dividing Line Betwixt Virginia and North Carolina" William Byrd (1728) mentions a dozen or more instances where wild turkeys help to supply the larder. On Sept. 23, he says³ "Our hunters brought us four wild turkeys, which at

¹ Force, P. Vol. III, p. 30.

² Sheas Early Southern Tracts. No. II. The Sotweed Factor. London, 1708, pp. 19, 20.

³ The Westover Manuscripts. Petersburg, Va., 1841, pp. 39, 45, 47, 48, 49, 51, 52, 54, 64, 69, 76, 78, 80.

that season began to be fat and very delicious especially the hens. These birds seem to be of the bustard kind, and fly heavily. Some of them are exceedingly large, and weigh upwards of forty pounds; nay, some bold historians venture to say, upwards of fifty pounds. They run very fast, stretching forth their wings all the time, like the ostrich, by way of sails to quicken their speed. They roost commonly upon very high trees, standing near some river or creek, and are so stupefied at the sight of fire, that if you make a blaze in the night near the place where they roost, you may fire upon them several times successively, before they will dare to fly away. Their spurs are so sharp and strong, that the Indians used formerly to point their arrows with them, though now they point them with a sharp white stone. In the spring the turkey-cocks begin to gobble, which is the language wherein they make love." In another place, he mentions the attitude of Indians towards mixing meats in the same dish. "Our men killed a very fat buck and several turkeys. These two kinds of meat they boiled together, with the addition of a little rice or French barley, made excellent soup, and what happens rarely in other good things, it never cloyed, no more than an engaging wife would do, by being a constant dish. Our Indian was very superstitious in this matter, and told us, with a face full of concern, that if we continued to boil venison and turkey together, we should for the future kill nothing, because the spirit that presided over the woods would drive all the game out of our sight." "The Indian likewise shot a wild turkey, but confessed he would not bring it us lest we should continue to provoke the guardian of the forest, by cooking the beasts of the field and the birds of the air together in one vessel. . . ." Of this same practice, "A Journey to the Land of Eden 1733" gives us the following: ¹ "It was strange we met with no wild turkeys (Morris' Creek near Banister River), this being the season in which great numbers of them used to be seen towards the mountains. They commonly perched on the high trees near the rivers and creeks. But this voyage, to our great misfortune, there were none to be found. So that we could not commit that abomination, in the sight of Indians, of mixing the flesh of deer and turkeys in our broth."

¹ The Westover Manuscripts. p. 108.

In a Letter written March 21, 1739, John Clayton of Gloucester Co., Va. writes¹ of "Virginia Game and Field Sports." "Then for fowls (there are) wild Turkey's very numerous" and in another place he contends that "the diversion of shooting Turkies is only to be had in the upper parts of the Countrey where the woods are of a very large extent, and but few settlements as yet tho' they increase daily." Two years later, Oldmixon (l. c. p. 445) remarks, "There's great variety of wild Fowl, as Swans. . . . Curlews. . . . ; and which is best of all of them, wild Turkies, much larger than our tame; they are in season all the Year. The *Virginians* have several ingenious Devices to take them; among others, a Trap, wherein 16 or 17 have been caught at a time."

In 1765, Rogers states that the colonists in Maryland,² "in their infant state. . . were greatly assisted by them (Indians) receiving . . . plentiful supplies of. . . turkies." Of the period from 1763 to 1783, Jos. Doddridge remarks that,³ "The wild Turkeys which used to be so abundant as to supply no inconsiderable portion of provision for the first settlers, are now rarely seen." In his "Travels in North America" Chastellux notes⁴ the wild turkey only in Virginia. In "Notes of the State of Virginia" written in 1781, Thos. Jefferson merely lists (p. 99) "*Meleagris Gallopavo. Gallapavo sylvestris. Wild Turkey*" for the state. About this same period, J. F. D. Smyth records⁵ "a great abundance of game, such as. . . wild turkeys," in Pitsylvania Co., Va. At Wart Mt., when he and a young backwoodsman returned, they "brought a fine wild turkey which he had shot: and he carried it along with us in order to dress for supper where we should halt at night." On Little River, "Here we killed another wild turkey and dressed it for supper as before; indeed they were so numerous that we could have easily subsisted a company of men upon them, and might kill almost any number we pleased." Finally, in "A Topographical Descrip-

¹ The Virginia Magazine. Vol. VII, Oct. 1899. No. 2, pp. 173, 174.

² Rogers, Major Robert. A Concise Account of North America. London, 1765, p. 88.

³ Doddridge, Rev. Dr. Jos. Notes on the Settlement and Indian Wars of the Western Parts of Virginia and Pennsylvania, from the year 1763 until the year 1783 inclusive, etc. Wellsburg, Va., 1824, p. 69.

⁴ Chastellux, Marquis de. Travels . . . Translation N. Y., 1828, p. 251.

⁵ Smyth, J. F. D. A Tour in the United States of America. London, 1784, 2 vols. Vol. I, pp. 289, 309, 311.

tion of the County of Prince George in Virginia 1793" John Jones Spooner presents the last note of the century.¹ "The woods afford wild turkies."

In the next century, John Woods remarks of Pews Town, Va. that² "We were told. . . turkeys. . . were plentiful in many places, but we had not seen any." Three years later, Blane, (l. c. pp. 84, 86, 87, 88, 106) in a journey across the Alleghanies along the road from Hagerstown to Cumberland, remarks (1822-23) that "These mountains abound with such game as deer, wild turkies. . . ." From Cumberland to Wheeling "Wild Turkies. . . are uncommonly plentiful in these mountains, owing to the rocky nature of the ground, which will in all probabilities prevent its being cultivated for centuries," and in this region he holds that the presence of rattlesnakes deters hunters from hunting turkies. Finally, at Blue Lick he finds, "The neighbourhood, however, abounds in deer and wild turkeys, which afford excellent sport for a hunter." In 1824, Candler, in "A Summary View of America," (p. 79) remarks that "Turkies are very common." He may be speaking of the domestic form. In discussing the "Physical Geography of Maryland" J. T. Ducatel says³ "The eastern flank of South mountain (valley of Middletown). . . is the retreat of large gangs of wild turkey (*Meleagris gallapavo*). . . ." In 1842, J. S. Buckingham, in speaking of Virginia, says⁴ "These potatoes and the turkeys, of which Virginia furnished also the first supply to Britain, have neither of them degenerated in this state, from their ancient and original stock." In 1879, J. T. Scharf publishes his "History of Maryland" in which he asserts that⁵ "In the 'backwoods,' the wild turkeys and deer abounded in great numbers; deer and wild turkeys were still shot on the Patapsco at Ellicotts Mills as late as 1773 and no man's larder needed to be empty at any time."

¹ Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls. Vol. III, 1794, p. 86.

² Early Western Travels. X, p. 205 (orig. p. 48).

³ Transactions Md. Acad. Sci. and Lit. Vol. I, Baltimore, 1837, p. 40.

⁴ Buckingham, J. S. The Slave States of America, London, 1842. 2 vols. Vol. II, p. 286.

⁵ Scharf, J. T. Vol. II, pp. 8, 4.